



# SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk  
email: info@sunnysideallotments.org.uk

No: 2 April 2016



This is the first issue of the Sunnyside Allotment Society newsletter since the sudden death of Ted Dyer, long-time tenant, and friend of many of us on Sunnyside. You can click on this link <http://www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk/about/remembering-ted/> to access a special webpage, put together by Angela and Jenny, devoted to the tributes which people have offered, along with photos of Ted over the years. He is irreplaceable, and will long be missed.

Many of Ted's barrows and some tools are still available to tenants for a small contribution which will go to the cost of his memorial seat. Also, there is some black weed suppressant sheeting, various lengths of wire mesh, some garden hose with its own winding frame, lots of 6" plastic pipe cut into short sections for protecting young brassica plants, and some long iron poles which can be sawn into useful sections for posts. To see any of these items, please contact me on 07835 623981.

Lin Phillips, Editor [linphillips@btinternet.com](mailto:linphillips@btinternet.com)

## Chairman's Notes

It seems strange going to the allotments without seeing Ted, and his presence will long be felt.

It is planned that a memorial bench will be erected at the bottom of plot A16 on SSO; this was one of Ted's allotments. The proceeds of the sale of Ted's tools is going into the memorial fund and Lin is doing the hard work, along with others - many thanks. The details of the grand unveiling are still to be worked out, but it is hoped that the event will take place on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June, as Ted's group of retired colleagues from the railways will be meeting in Berkhamsted for lunch on that day, and would like to be present.

One piece of non-gardening advice that we might all take is to make a Will and to leave it where it will be found!

Spring is with us and seeds are shooting, however this includes the weeds so be quick!

Tree roots have now been cleared on SSO so the intended site can be finally levelled for a communal shed. The components of the shed do need some renovation (including building a new base), so if anyone has relevant skills please volunteer.

Good gardening  
John Eaton

## Maintaining paths

As the days lengthen, so does the grass on the paths around our plots! A reminder that we each have a responsibility to keep them mown and edged. Also, please make sure stones are kept off the paths, as they can damage mowers.

## Keeping your Gardening Equipment Safe

Spring is in the air, and Hertfordshire Constabulary is launching its seasonal crime prevention campaign, Operation Gnome, to help remind residents to keep their gardens, sheds and allotments secure. We are all out working on our plots and perhaps storing new tools in our sheds. The Police remind us that it is traditionally a time when burglars target sheds, garages and outbuildings, on the lookout for tools. So, they advise us to always lock our sheds, preferably with two 'hasp and staple' locks (one near the top and one near the bottom of the door). Also, tools and gardening equipment should be visibly marked with your postcode and house number - this can deter thieves and help police identify the rightful owner.

For more detailed advice about keeping your home and garden secure, visit [www.herts.police.uk/crimeprevention](http://www.herts.police.uk/crimeprevention).



### Open Day 2016

Our annual Open Day will once again be the last day of the National Allotment Week, and will fall this year on Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> August – a date for your diary. Planning usually starts well in advance, with publicity all around the town from June onwards. Visitors to the Open Day enjoy seeing the allotments as well as talking to gardeners on their plots. A cup of tea and some homemade cake is always very welcome, followed by a chance to buy some freshly picked produce to take home.

Committee members Wendy and Angela will be organising the day, and will send out a call for assistance closer to the event.

The musical accompaniment to last December's Christmas Drinks event was particularly appreciated, and we wonder if there are any musicians who would like to provide a musical background to the Open Day; perhaps only for a part of the afternoon, for instance. Please let someone on the Committee know if you would be willing.

### Future Events in 2016

Other dates for your diary are the annual Sunnyside AGM on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> November and the Christmas Drinks at the tea hut on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> December.



### Compost Awareness Week 2016, 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> May

Did you know of the above celebration of compost? The following information about compostable materials on the allotment is taken from the website, [www.homecomposting.org.uk/](http://www.homecomposting.org.uk/), which has a host of other information, including photo competitions for schools, etc.

Compost heaps need a mixture of soft plant material like grass cuttings as well as carbon-rich tougher, 'brown' vegetable matter. As well as grass cuttings, soft young weeds are normally in plentiful supply, and these rot quickly if added to the heap. Comfrey leaves and nettles make good 'activators', Some of the horse or cattle manure delivered to the site can also be kept back to add to the compost bin to act as an activator.

Do not put perennial weeds such as buttercup, bindweed or ground elder directly onto the heap as they will survive the composting process unless you are using a 'Hot Heap'. They can be put in a plastic sack with some grass mowings (if available) and left to dry until the weeds are no longer recognisable. This may take several months; they can then be added to the compost heap. Some weeds can be killed by drowning in a bucket of water for a month or two.

The wood ash from bonfires can be composted, or just spread around fruit bushes and trees. Please do not bring uncooked or cooked kitchen waste, especially meat or dairy products onto the site, as these attract rats.

Items that are a little slower to decompose include windfall fruit and the leaves/tops from vegetables, old flowers or bedding plants, soft prunings, and of course tea-bags - if you can find the time to relax. Please note that not all tea-bags will compost. Chop up tough items using shears or a sharp spade - the smaller you make them, the quicker they will compost. They can also be crushed by hitting with a spade or hammer.

Allotment browns include items such as brassica stalks, which are slow to decompose and are best chopped or crushed. Old straw or hay from animal bedding or from around the strawberries is valuable, too, in providing the correct green/brown balance and retaining moisture. Tough hedge clippings and woody prunings will be very slow to compost. Autumn leaves are very slow to rot, and are best stored separately to make leaf mould.

**Please Note:** To offset rising printing costs, an electronic version of future editions of the newsletter will be sent to all those people that supply an email address to Jenny Sippings – ([jennysippings@virginmedia.com](mailto:jennysippings@virginmedia.com)).

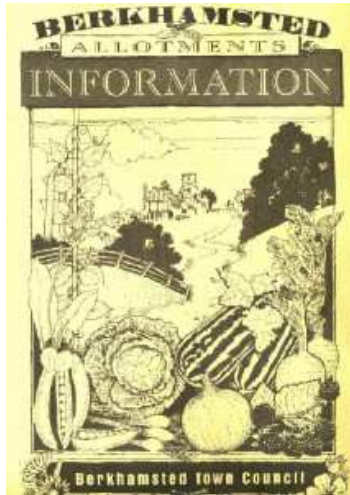


### Allotment information Pack

The Council should give all new tenants an Allotment Information Pack, but if you haven't had one, do ask at the council offices, or view it on our own website:

<http://www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk/about/allotments=information-pack>

It contains lots of useful information for tenants, both new and old. At this time of year, the advice on water conservation is particularly worth a look.



### We're all going on a Summer Holiday – no more working parties until October

At the last working party for the season in March we cleared up the debris from previous tasks – buried the soil left over from the toilet renovation and had a couple of good low smoke bonfires. We also did some habitat pile construction in the wild-life area.

Many thanks to all of you who turned out at one time or another during the year, either on the working days or doing preparations beforehand. And special thanks to the souper (!) lunch teams.

Make a note of the first working day of next season – Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Tidying up leaf and woodchip bins will probably be on the agenda. And on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> November we will be working in Birtchnell's Copse (at the top of SSN) with Andrew Calderwood.

Meanwhile, if you spot a job which you think is a candidate for communal labour then please let us or a committee member know about it.

Neil & Tricia Kennedy, C23 & B33B

[neil@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:neil@sunnysideallotments.org.uk)



### Asparagus

26 asparagus crowns need a home.

Please contact Rosemary on 877321



### An Event on Sunnyside New?

Over the years, our communal events have generally taken place on Sunnyside Old, but is there enough interest and willingness amongst tenants on Sunnyside New to take a lead on a new event on that side of the road? If so, there will be encouragement and support available from those who generally get involved in the events on SSO. It could be a Midsummer picnic, or something later in the year, perhaps. If you and your neighbours would be interested in taking such an idea forward, just contact any of the Committee and we will do our best to help you get started.

**Your Current Committee Members**

<b>Chairman:</b>	John Eaton	865307
<b>Vice Chairman &amp; Newsletter Editor:</b>	Lin Phillips	862882
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jenny Sippings	865890
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Andy James	865061
<b>Minutes Secretary:</b>	Cynthia Fulks	879410
<b>Other members:</b>	Wendy Calder	767289
	Adrian Scarborough	384974
	Angela Wheeldon	874440
	John Goffey	

You can email any member of the committee by putting their first name in front of:  
 @sunnysideallotments.org.uk apart from John Eaton who is: johne@ and John Goffey who is: johng@

**Tenancy Changes**  
*Welcome to:*  
 B21B Barbara Newton

*Goodbye to:*  
 B22A Brian Jackson  
 C35A John Powell  
 N3 Sara Jefferson  
 N12 Martin and Maya Moore  
 N42 Laurence O'Shea

**Casual Work Wanted**  
 Our youngest tenant, Sam, is keen to earn some money, and is offering his energies to anyone who might need a hand with mowing, digging or other jobs on their allotment. Sam is still at school, so he is available after school hours and at the weekend. To make initial enquiries, please contact Sam on 07594625651 or [sambarley13@outlook.com](mailto:sambarley13@outlook.com).

**Damp Proof Membrane for Sale**  
 I find that Damp Proof Membrane is by far the best treatment for those brambles and other weeds that fight their way through the lighter membranes. It stops the light getting through enough that the weeds die back and the soil is ready for planting. I am about to order 24 by 4 metres of it through Travis Perkins. This is the best price but there is too much for me. Would anyone be interested in splitting the cost? It is about £60 all in.  
 Many thanks, Rachel Lyon, N63.  
[rachel.edmonds36@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.edmonds36@gmail.com)

**Rotavator for Sale**  
 I have just given up my allotment B22A because I have mobility problems.  
 I would like to sell a Coopers mini rotavator that I have only used twice.  
 It cost £149.00, but would sell for £50. I can deliver.  
 Brian Jackson 01442 384663 or mobile 07722704039.

**Sunnyside Allotment Society Subscriptions**

If you haven't paid your £3.50 subs yet this year, please do so as soon as possible. Either give it directly to Andy, our treasurer, or leave it in an envelope for him in the tea hut. By being a paid up member, you support the Sunnyside Allotment Society, which works on your behalf co-ordinating work to maintain the communal areas of the site, and hosting the annual Open Day and other events. The SAS reports to the council, and is able to raise issues and represent the best interests of tenants at regular meetings. The benefits of paid up membership of the SAS are also that, as well as receiving this newsletter, you can participate in the group seed ordering scheme with Kings Seeds in the autumn, and make a considerable saving on the cost of your seed order.

Out of your individual subscriptions, the SAS pays a group membership fee to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG); a host of interesting articles and advice are available on its website. Just contact Jenny Sippings for the password.



**Sunnyside Allotment Society Subs**

Subs for 2015/2016 (£3.50) can be sent with this slip to Andy James (4 Field Way) or left at the tea hut on B15. (Cheques payable to Sunnyside Allotment Society please).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Plot Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_